

# JDS Long Jump Session – Long Jump Approach Nunawading 2004

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## INTRODUCTION

In the Long Jump (with professional athletes) the approach is usually 16 to 24 strides long, but should be shortened by younger athletes to suit their age, development, and speed.

The objective of the approach run is for the athlete to achieve the ideal speed and rhythm (consistent stride length), which will enable them to accurately hit the take-off board each time.

Many young athletes make the mistake of believing that a long run-up means a longer jump. A run-up that is too long will result in the jumper reaching maximum speed before takeoff and therefore slow down before the take-off board. On the other hand, a run-up that is too short will not allow the jumper to reach maximum velocity

## CALCULATING YOUR RUN-UP

The length of the run will depend on the athlete's age and speed. When first determining the number of strides in the approach run start by matching the number of stride with the athlete's age (note this is an ideal starting point, this can be altered to suit the individuals capabilities);

AGE GROUP	SAME FOOT START AND TAKE-OFF (STRIDES)	DIFFERENT FOOT START AND TAKE-OFF (STRIDES)
UNDER 12	12	13
UNDER 13	14	13
UNDER 14	14	15
UNDER 15	15	15

To work out your start point for you Long Jump approach do the following:

- Determine the take off foot (try hopping for distance (5 hops) on each foot and see which one takes you further...this should be your take off foot).
- Stand with your back to the jumping pit and the heel of your preferred starting foot on the take off board scratch line
- Run up the runway the required number of strides (see above chart). You will need a second person to assist you in counting the strides and placing a marker at your final stride.
- The next step is to attempt a of run through, with a second person watching where your take off foot lands in relation to the take off board (move your start position to suit). Repeat the run up and marker adjustment 4 or 5 times to establish a consistent approach run onto the take off board
- Once achieved use a tape measure to measure the distance accurately and record it for future use

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## **IDEAL APPROACH**

The start of the approach run should be marked and the athlete should commence the start from a standing start. Some athletes use a 'walk on start' or 'run on start' which will provide more initial speed but if not consistent will impact the accuracy of the approach run onto the take off board.

The athlete begins the run with a marked forward lean to develop speed but before they reach the take off board they should be upright. The athlete should be on the balls of the feet as in sprinting with a natural head position, the eyes focused beyond the pit and not at the take off board (find an object to focus on e.g. a tree in the distance at the end of the pit).

## **ALTERING YOUR RUN-UP**

As an athlete becomes fitter, faster, stronger throughout the season the length of the run-up will change.

It should also be noted that your run-up will also be affected by weather conditions. In general, a headwind will require you to move your start position towards the take off board (into the wind), while a tail wind will require you to move your start position away from the take off board (again into the wind), this can range from 150mm to 450mm depending on the wind strength.

## **IF THINGS GO WRONG**

If you are inconsistent in your position on the take off board, the problem is most likely in one of the following:

- Inconsistent stride length on your approach. Practice running a 25m straight, get someone to count your strides and where your feet fall at the end of the 25m, keep doing this to build up a consistent running stride.
- Many athletes make an error in their first 3 to 4 strides as they start their run, quite often changing their stride lengths as they accelerate. Practice your run up with someone recording where your 5<sup>th</sup> stride hits each time, keep repeating this to get a consistent stride length into the acceleration phase of the run up.